



Getting the Most From the Annual Health Check

PETSLIKEMINE
STAYING WELL

The injection is the least interesting thing that happens: what to bring, what your vet examines, and the questions to ask

PET NAME	SPECIES / BREED	DATE OF VISIT

Most people book the yearly visit and think of it as “the booster”. The injection is genuinely the least interesting thing that happens in the room. While your vet chats to you, they are running a full physical examination that takes in almost every system in the body, a screen for the problems you cannot see yet. A little preparation turns a rushed ten minutes into a proper yearly review.

WHAT TO BRING

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| ☐ A notes list: for the week before, jot the half-noticed things (a new lump, drinking more, slowing down) | ☐ The current food (a photo of the packet is fine) and how much per day |
| ☐ The names of any medicines, supplements and the flea/worm products you use | ☐ Any sample your practice asked for (a fresh urine sample kept cool is often the most useful) |
| ☐ Your pet’s weight trend and this vaccination record, if you keep one | |

WHAT YOUR VET ACTUALLY EXAMINES (NOSE TO TAIL)

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| ☐ Eyes, ears and mouth: dental disease is the single most common finding, and almost silent | ☐ Heart and lungs: a soft murmur can be the first sign of heart disease, long before any cough |
| ☐ Abdomen, lymph nodes and skin: feeling the organs, checking for lumps, fleas and flea dirt | ☐ Weight and body condition score (out of 9): weight creep is slow and easy to miss at home |
| ☐ Joints and mobility: stiffness a cat hides by quietly stopping jumping, read as “just old age” | ☐ The conversation: your history is worth as much as the exam; appetite, thirst, toileting, energy |

QUESTIONS TO ASK (TICK, THEN WRITE THE ANSWER)

QUESTION	VET’S ANSWER / PLAN
Which vaccines are due this year: the core (up to every 3 years) or the annual lifestyle ones?	
Is my pet a healthy weight and body condition, and if not, what should we aim for?	
How do the teeth look, and what should I be doing at home?	
Is our parasite plan still right for how my pet actually lives?	
Anything you would like to keep an eye on or recheck before next year?	

MY OWN QUESTIONS TO REMEMBER

“HE SEEMS FINE” IS THE REASON TO COME, NOT TO SKIP

Pets are built to hide illness, so a pet that seems fine is exactly the one the exam earns its keep on. And the rhythm changes: for senior pets, and any pet with an ongoing condition, the useful interval often shortens from once a year to every six months.

Written and reviewed by Dr Alastair Greenway MRCVS and Claire Greenway BVM&S MRCVS. This sheet explains and records. It does not diagnose or prescribe. Always follow your own vet’s instructions.

How to use. Start the notes list today, bring it plus your food, medicine and product details, and treat the visit as the yearly review of your pet’s whole prevention plan, not just a jab. A wellbeing aid, not a substitute for veterinary advice.

THE EXAM IS THE REASON IT MATTERS, NOT THE INJECTION